

Claims:

1. A cartridge containing one or more beverage ingredients and being formed from substantially air- and water-impermeable materials, the cartridge defining a storage chamber containing the one or more beverage ingredients and a manifold chamber, the cartridge comprising an opening through which the one or more beverage ingredients can be filled into the storage chamber, the opening being closed by a lid having a first portion overlying the manifold chamber and a second portion overlying the storage chamber, wherein the first portion of the lid is pierceable in use to accommodate an inflow of an aqueous medium into the manifold chamber and the lid is pierceable in use to accommodate an outflow of beverage formed from interaction of the aqueous medium and the one or more beverage ingredients in the storage chamber.
- 20 2. A cartridge as claimed in claim 1 further comprising a discharge chamber which is overlain by a third portion of the lid which is pierceable in use to accommodate the outflow of beverage formed from interaction of the aqueous medium and the one or more beverage ingredients in the storage chamber.
- 25 3. A cartridge as claimed in claim 2 wherein the discharge chamber comprises a discharge spout.

4. A cartridge as claimed in claim 3 wherein the manifold chamber and the storage chamber are divided by a partition comprising one or more apertures.
- 5 5. A cartridge as claimed in claim 4 wherein the apertures are sized to prevent passage of the one or more beverage ingredients from the storage chamber into the manifold chamber.
- 10 6. A cartridge as claimed in claim 5 wherein the manifold chamber at least partially surrounds the storage chamber.
- 15 7. A cartridge as claimed in claim 6 wherein the manifold chamber substantially encircles the storage chamber.
- 20 8. A cartridge as claimed in claim 4 wherein the manifold chamber substantially encircles the storage chamber and the apertures are provided along substantially all of an interface between the manifold chamber and the storage chamber.
- 25 9. A cartridge as claimed in claim 8 wherein the apertures have a width of between 0.25 and 0.35 mm.
10. A cartridge as claimed in claim 9 wherein the apertures have a length of between 1.4 and 1.8 mm.
- 30 11. A cartridge as claimed in claim 10 wherein between 20 and 40 apertures are provided.

12. A cartridge as claimed in claim 11 wherein the manifold chamber comprises an inlet portion into which the aqueous medium is introduced, wherein the inlet portion communicates with the remainder of the manifold chamber via one or more openings.
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13. A cartridge as claimed in claim 12 wherein the inlet portion is circular.
- 10 14. A cartridge as claimed in claim 2 wherein the storage chamber and the discharge chamber are divided by an inner member.
- 15 15. A cartridge as claimed in claim 14 wherein the inner member comprises one or more apertures.
16. A cartridge as claimed in claim 15 wherein the inner member comprises a filter to prevent passage of the one or more beverage ingredients from the storage chamber into the discharge chamber while accommodating passage of the beverage therethrough.
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17. A cartridge as claimed in claim 16 wherein the lid is joined to the outer member and the inner member.
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18. A cartridge as claimed in claim 17 wherein the lid is joined to the outer member around a periphery of the cartridge and the lid is joined to the inner member at or near a center of the cartridge.
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19. A cartridge as claimed in claim 18 wherein the lid is joined to a discharge funnel of the inner member.
20. A cartridge as claimed in claim 19 wherein the outer
5 member has a greater rigidity than the lid.
21. A cartridge as claimed in claim 20 wherein the location
of piercing of the lid to accommodate the inflow and
outflow is such that aqueous medium passing through the
10 cartridge moves generally inwardly from the inlet to
the outlet.
22. A cartridge as claimed in claim 21 wherein the
cartridge is shaped such that the aqueous medium passes
15 through the storage chamber in a generally upwards
direction.
23. A plurality of cartridges, as claimed in claim 22,
wherein the percentage yield of the beverage produced
20 from the one or more beverage ingredients contained in
the cartridges is consistent to within 1.0 standard
deviations.
24. A method of use of a cartridge as claimed in claim 22
25 wherein the cartridge is displaced relative to one or
more static piercing elements in order to form the
inlet to, and outlet from, the cartridge.
25. A cartridge containing one or more beverage ingredients
30 and being formed from substantially air- and water-
impermeable materials, the cartridge defining a chamber

containing the one or more beverage ingredients, the cartridge further comprising a lid, the cartridge being configured such that the lid is pierceable in use when the cartridge is in an horizontal orientation to
5 accommodate both inflow and outflow of an aqueous medium to form a beverage from interaction of the aqueous medium and the one or more beverage ingredients in the chamber.

10 26. A cartridge as claimed in claim 25 wherein the inflow of aqueous medium is into a first chamber and the outflow of beverage is from a second chamber.

15 27. A cartridge as claimed in claim 26 wherein the first chamber is a manifold chamber.

28. A cartridge as claimed in claim 27 wherein the second chamber is a discharge chamber.

20 29. A cartridge as claimed in claim 28 further comprising a storage chamber containing the one or more beverage ingredients which is separate from the manifold chamber and the discharge chamber.